CRISIS HOTLINE
BY BOB MOLINIS, STEPHEN DESTEFANO & KURT SCHAFFENBERGER
DON'T SHOOT!
DON'T LOOK!
DON'T LISTEN!
KING SNAFU
SNAFU IS BACK IN TOWN!

PREVIOUSLY, IN HERO HOTLINE...
YOU GET YOUR KICKS BEATING ON A DEFENSELESS WOMAN, SCUZ? WANT TO GO A FEW ROUNDS WITH ME?
I FIND OUT YOU RAISED YOUR HAND TO HER AGAIN, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF DOING.
COUNT ON IT!
MY CLIENT IS FILING SUIT AGAINST YOU FOR THE INJURY YOU CAUSED HIM.
YOU MEAN, WHEN I STOPPED HIM FROM SLUGGING HIS WIFE?
FURTHER, WE ARE CONSIDERING FILING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST YOU.
THEY WANT ME TO COME WITH THEM TO MARS AND BE THEIR QUEEN!
GONE?
COOR
THAT'S RIGHT, BOSS-- LIKE THE MARTIANS CAME AND TOOK HER.
THREE MASKED GUNMEN CLIMBED ABOARD A SCHOOL BUS AND ANNOUNCED THEY WOULD HOLD ITS PASSENGERS HOSTAGE UNTIL THEIR DEMANDS WERE MET.)
THAT'S MY RUTHIE!
THAT WAS NEAT-O, MOM!
AS LONG AS YOU KIDS ARE SAFE, THAT'S WHAT MATTERS.

HERO HOTLINE 3 Published monthly and Copyright © 1989 DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Printed in Canada
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

ROLL CALL
DIAMONDETTE
STRETCH
HOTSHOT
MICROWAVE MOM
MR. MUSCLE
PRIVATE EYES
VOICEOVER AND FRED
GOOD MORNING, HERO HOTLINE.
WHERE DID YOU SPILL THE OATMEAL, SIR?
NO, MA'AM, I'M SORRY. WE CAN'T MAKE THE LINES AT MOTOR VEHICLE MOVE ANY FASTER.
I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE ALL DAY.
THIS IS NEAT-O, MOM. ARE WE STAYING HERE ALL DAY?
NOW, LISTEN TO ME, ALL OF YOU. I WANT YOU TO BE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOR. REMEMBER, THIS IS WHERE MOMMY WORKS -- I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO TROUBLE BECAUSE MY KIDS CAUSE PROBLEMS HERE.
KA GLUNK!
KA GLUNK!
KA GLUNK!
MRS. JACKSON? BRINGING IN THE RESERVES?
TODAY: 9:07
WEATHER
POSSIBLE SHOWERS
SORRY, BOSS -- THEY HAVE NO SCHOOL TODAY AND I COULDN'T GET A BABYSITTER...
THEN I SUPPOSE IT BEST THAT YOU STICK WITH DESK DUTY TODAY.
I'D LIKE YOU TO SHOW OUR NEW EMPLOYEE, MR. CARBONE, AROUND.
KA GLUNK KA GLUNK KA
2

MR. CARBONE, THIS IS MRS. JACKSON.
TERRY CARBONE... LIGHTNING EYES!
BELLE...OR MICRO-WAVABELLE...OR MICROWAVE MOM.
MY MOMMY IS A REAL HERO. SHE SAVED US FROM SOME BAD MEN...WITH GUNS.
THESE ARE MY CHILDREN, NAOMI, DWIGHT, AND RUTHIE.
HI, MR. GREENWALD. DO YOU STILL HAVE THAT CAPTAIN ZINGAROO SPACE BLASTER?
STILL IN THE LAB FOR FINGER-PRINT TESTS.
CAN I BORROW THIS BOOK?
SURE, KID.
DWIGHT--CUT IT OUT OR I'LL TELL MOMMY!
MR. GREENWALD, MRS. CULLIGAN HAS BEEN MISSING FOR A FULL WEEK. I WANT YOU TO TAKE MR. LEE WITH YOU THIS MORNING AND CLEAR UP THIS CASE ONCE AND FOR ALL.
OH, GOOD IDEA, BOSS. WHY DIDN'T YOU DECIDE THAT LAST WEEK WHEN I FIRST SUGGESTED IT?
C'MON, LES...WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO.
GREAT. AND ON THE WAY, PERHAPS I CAN TRY TO FOCUS ON FRED WITH A NEW LENS I'VE BEEN WORKING ON.
IF YOU WISH. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL SEE ME!
--OH YEAH? I'M NOT THE ONE WHO'S THE COWARD, PAL!
3

YEAH, I'LL MEET YOU. WE CAN SETTLE THIS LIKE MEN INSTEAD OF LIKE A COUPLE OF WIMPS LETTIN' TWO LAWYERS PRANCE AROUND A COURTROOM.
EIGHT TONIGHT. YEAH, I KNOW WHERE IT IS!
CHICKEN-LIVERED LITTLE WORM. PROBABLY WON'T EVEN SHOW UP...
TERRY CARBONE, I WANT YOU TO MEET STURGIS BUTTER--I MEAN, MISTER MUSCLE!
NOT ANY MORE, MOM. I DECIDED I'M CALLING MYSELF MIGHTY MIKE FROM NOW ON.
HE CHANGES HIS SUPERHERO NAME AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.
LIGHTNING EYES
WELL, MR. ROSARIO, I'M HONORED TO BE SPEAKING TO YOU.
YES, I GOT YOUR MESSAGE ABOUT USING MY FINGERS TO OPEN PANDORA'S BOX, BUT LET ME ASK YOU: IS THIS FOR REAL?... WELL, MR. ROSARIO, I'M REMINDED OF BABY FACE NELSON'S SECRET SAFE AND THAT BRIEFCASE FROM THE LUSITANIA ... NO, SIR. I'D BE HAPPY TO BE ON THE PROGRAM!
THIS MORNING? I GUESS I'D HAVE TO TAKE THE DAY OFF... I'LL GET BACK TO YOU IF THERE'S A PROBLEM... OKAY, BYE-BYE.
GET BACK HERE!
DON'T GIVE ME THAT SMILE!
FREELANCING, MISS THEOTOCOPOULOS?
4

COME WITH ME, PLEASE.

IN A WAY, BOSS. THAT WAS ALBERTO ROSARIO, THE VIDEO ... JOURNALIST. HE WANTS *ME* TO OPEN PANDORA'S BOX FOR HIM ON LIVE TV.

IT MEANS I NEED TO TAKE TODAY OFF. OKAY?

CAN'T STAND IN THE WAY OF HISTORY IN THE MAKING, I SUPPOSE.

DIANA, THIS IS TERRY CARBONE. HE STARTS WORKING WITH US TODAY.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

NICE TO MEET YOU. GOTTA RUN. SEE YA, MOM.

GOT A JOB FOR YOU, TOM.

LET ME GUESS, HARRY! COULD IT BE A... CAT IN A TREE?

CORRECT, STRETCH. THE ADDRESS IS...

OH, FORGET THE ADDRESS, SOOZ. I'LL JUST GO FROM *TREE* TO *TREE* ALL OVER TOWN LOOKING FOR LITTLE LOST KITTIES.

WAIT! I DID THAT LAST WEEK. MAYBE I *SHOULD* TAKE THE ADDRESS.

...15 MANSION WAY, OUT IN EAGLE'S BLUFF.

OUT IN THE RITZY 'BURBS, *HUNH*? CAN'T THOSE FOLKS JUST *BUY* SOMEBODY TO KEEP TRACK OF THEIR CATS?

MRS. CULLIGAN? HAVE YOU COME HOME, BY ANY CHANCE?

ONE OF THESE DAYS, HARRY...

BOY, YOU GUYS REALLY DID A THOROUGH SEARCH.
WE DIDN'T DO THIS, LESTER.
BEING INTANGIBLE, AS WELL AS INVISIBLE, I COULDN'T DO IT EVEN IF I HAD WANTED TO.
WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE ADMIRING THE DECOR. PUT THOSE LENSES TO USE AND FIND US SOME CLUES.
HMMM. CONSIDERING THE GENERAL LACK OF DUST, I'D SAY MRS. CULLIGAN MUST'VE BEEN A VERY NEAT PERSON.
WHICH LEADS ME TO SUSPECT THAT SOMEONE ELSE TRACKED THIS DIRT ONTO HER RUG.
DON'T LOOK AT ME.
;HAWHAW! GREAT LINE, FRED!
PRIVATE EYES TO SOOZ-- TIE IN TO MY LENS READINGS AND ANALYZE THIS DIRT, PLEASE.
CLICK
COMPUTER LINK UP TO SOOZIE Q!
ANALYZING. PARTICLES OF MUD, CEMENT, AND SOOT INDICATE A BASEMENT ENVIRONMENT.
DO YOU WISH A PROBABILITY ANALYSIS THAT IT IS THE BUILDING YOU ARE IN?
ANALYSIS: BASEMENT ENVIRONMENT
I DON'T THINK THAT'S NECESSARY, SOOZ.
X-RAY VISION ON.
TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE, GOOD BUDDY!
6

YOICKS!
IF YOUR PROBABILITY WAS LESS THAN 100%, SOOZ, YOU'D BE
I'VE FOUND THE MISSING MRS. CULLIGAN. LET'S GO, GUYS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S RIGHT HERE IN THE HOUSE ALL THIS TIME. I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU CHECKED AROUND, FRED!
I DID, V-O, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE...
...THE BASEMENT DOOR IS LOCKED!
SO? WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST WALK THROUGH IT?
I CAN'T DO THINGS LIKE THAT.
YOU'RE NOT DOING A VERY GOOD JOB CONVINCING THE BOSS THAT HE SHOULD GIVE YOU A LONG-TERM CONTRACT.
VO'S MICROPHONE AND PALM-HELD LOUD-SPEAKER
COULD YOU TWO STOP ARGUING AND GIVE ME A HAND HERE?
DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF, LES. I'LL PUT THAT LOCK OUT OF COMMISSION WITH A LITTLE NOISE POWER!
YAAAA
7

I WONDER IF ANYBODY WHO HEARD THAT WILL CALL THE POLICE.
CLUNK
I DOUBT THAT ANYBODY WHO HEARD IT WILL HEAR ANYTHING ELSE FOR AWHILE.
KLIK
GIVE ME A LITTLE WARNING SO I CAN GO OUT AND BUY EARPLUGS NEXT TIME, ANDY.
SURE THING, LES. NOW LET'S GET THIS DINGBAT BROAD OUT OF--
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DOOR?
YOU THINK THE OLD LADY...?
GUYS, QUICK-- HIDE!
NO NEED FOR ME TO DO THAT.
MY LOYAL SUBJECTS, RETURNED FROM YOUR VOYAGE TO EARTH. WAS YOUR SEARCH SUCCESSFUL?
NOT YET, YOUR HIGHNESS. WE NEED FURTHER HELP FROM YOU IN LOCATING WHAT YOU EARTH PEOPLE CALL "MONEY".

I THINK IT'S TIME WE STOPPED THIS INVASION FROM MARS.

WHAT THE--

PEOPLE OF MARS-- THIS IS FIRKON OF JUPITER! HEED THIS MESSAGE!

SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY OR THE FORCES OF MY PLANET WILL *BLAST* YOU INTO *COSMIC DUST!*

I'M GETTIN' *OUTTA* HERE!

WAIT FOR ME!

YOICKS.

YAHHHH

:HAHAHA: COME ON DOWN FROM YOUR THRONE, MRS. CULLIGAN. IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO EARTH :SNICKER:

MR. VOICE-OVER, LAND'S SAKES--HOW DID *YOU* EVER GET TO MARS?

ALL RIGHT, MRS. BURL NGTON-GRIMES...
THAT'S GRIMES-BURLINGTON
RIGHT. WHERE'S THE CAT?
OH, DEAR TRUFFLES IS UP IN THAT TREE. I'M SO AFRAID HE COULD FALL OUT AND HARM HIMSELF
YOU'RE SURE IT'S THIS TREE?
ABSOLUTELY
I SEE HIM-- OH, HELLO
HELLO
UH, MRS BURLINGTON-GRIMES..
GRIMES-BURLINGTON
YES THERE WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO BE A LITTLE GRIMES-BURLINGTON M SSING WOULD THERE?
MAXIMILIAN? OH THAT CHILD IS AROUND SOMEWHERE, I'M SURE
WHY DO YOU ASK?
FLIK!
FUTAT
JUST CURIOUS
I BELIEVES THESE ARE YOURS
OH TRUFFLES--YOU SILLY CAT YOU COULD HAVE GOTTEN HURT
I'M GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS BUSINESS
MOTHER, I RESENT THIS INVASION OF MY PRIVACY! YOU'LL HEAR FROM MY ATTORNEY
10

MR. ZEEP, YOU'RE OFF DUTY. I SUGGEST YOU GO HOME AND GET SOME REST. AND TAKE MARIE WITH YOU.
HERO'S UNION NOW
UNION
MOM, I'M HUNGRY.
YOU JUST ATE.
I'M THIRSTY
YOU JUST HAD A DRINK.
I HAVE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM
WILL YOU EXCUSE ME A FEW MOMENTS, TERRY?
HEY, NEAT-O!
LIKE IT, PARDNER? ;WHIFFSH:
HOW'D YOU LEARN TO DO THAT?
WHAT? SHOOT THESE LITTLE FIREBALLS? I DON'T KNOW-- I JUST CAN.
I THINK MY MOM ATE TOO MUCH SPICY FOOD RIGHT BEFORE I WAS BORN.
ASBESTOS
AND HERE'S THE STAR OF OUR SHOW ALBERTO!
Alberto
CHN 17
10:30 AM
AGENTS MEMO
SOFTBALL PRACTICE THURSDAY
NEXT WEEK HOTLINE VS GREEN TEAM

THANK YOU, EVERYONE. AS YOU KNOW, TODAY WE WILL MAKE TELEVISION HISTORY BY OPENING PANDORA'S BOX ON LIVE TV.
THE BOX WAS DISCOVERED NEAR ATHENS BY A MEMBER OF MY FILM CREW WHEN WE WERE THERE LAST MONTH SEARCHING FOR THE BONES OF THE GODS OF MOUNT OLYMPUS
AND HERE TO HELP US WITH THIS TREASURE OF ANCIENT GREECE IS A WOMAN WHOSE VERY ANCESTORS COULD HAVE BEEN THOSE SELFSAME GODS, A WOMAN WITH DIAMOND-LIKE FINGERS DIANA THEOTOCOPOULOS!
WELCOME, DIANA
THANK YOU, ALBERTO IT'S A PLEASURE TO BE HERE
LADIES, DON'T TRY THIS TRICK AT HOME WITHOUT DIANA'S POWER, YOU'LL JUST END UP BREAKING A NAIL.
SHE MUST EAT AN AWFUL LOT OF GELATIN!
DIANA WORKS FOR THE HERO HOTLINE, BY THE WAY, SO THOSE OF YOU WHO MIGHT NEED HER HELP OR YOU GUYS LOOKING FOR A DATE CAN CALL HER AT 1-800-555-HERO.
HOW ARE WE DOING, DI?
SNAP
JUST ABOUT FINISHED.
THERE
AND HERE IT COMES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AS WE OPEN PANDORA'S BOX. WILL IT BE FILLED WITH GREAT TREASURE? OR, LIKE ITS MYTHICAL ORIGIN, WILL WE BE UNLEASHING ALL THE EVILS INTO THE WORLD?
WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM FOR A BULLETIN FROM GBS NEWS!
SPECIAL BULLETIN

LIVE FROM THE STOCK EXCHANGE THIS IS LARRY DUNNE

AS YOU CAN SEE BEHIND ME, CHAOS IS REIGNING HERE. ALL TRADING HAS BEEN *TOTALLY* DISRUPTED BY THE MAN IN THE CENTER OF THE TRADING FLOOR.

RED ALERT! RED ALERT! ALL AVAILABLE AGENTS REPORT TO THE STOCK EXCHANGE *IMMEDIATELY*

SEARCH FILE

PERPETRATOR IDENTIFIED AS BARTHOLOMEW HIGGENS, *A.K.A. SNAFU.* HAS THE ABILITY TO GENERATE BLINDING LIGHTS AND DEAFENING SOUNDS, CREATING TOTAL CHAOS AROUND HIM LAST SEEN IN NEW YORK, APPREHENDED AT THAT TIME BY *MAN-BAT*

RHHHHH

DINNGKR

EEPGONG

ANG

WHIRRR

BZZZT

FILE

WE'LL SEE HOW THIS GUY LIKES THE *SOUND* OF MY FIST SLAMMING INTO HIS FACE

FILE

I'LL *HEAT* THINGS UP FOR HIM, SOOZ

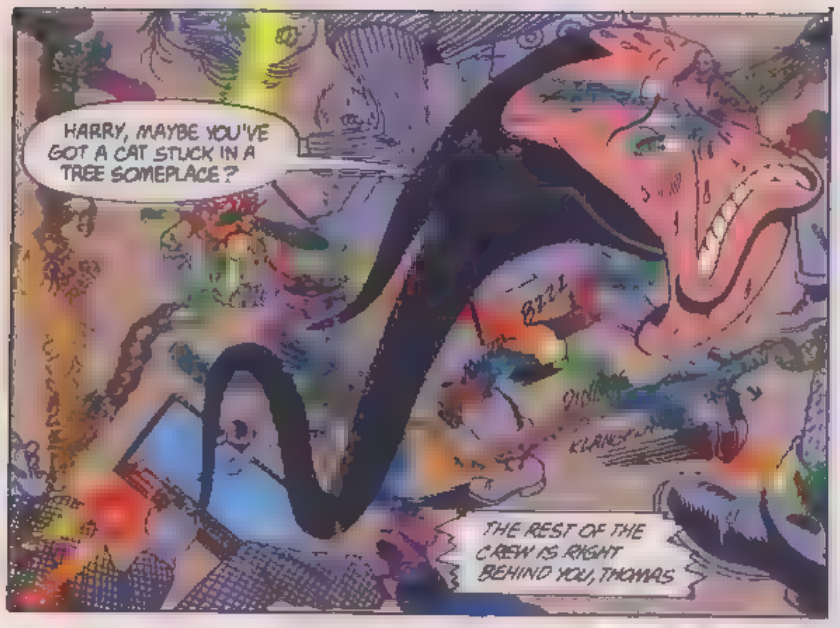
BOSS, I DON'T THINK THE TWO OF *US* ARE *ENOUGH* TO STOP WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE STOCK EXCHANGE HAVE YOU *LOOKED* AT THE RIOT THAT SNAFU GUY'S CAUSING?

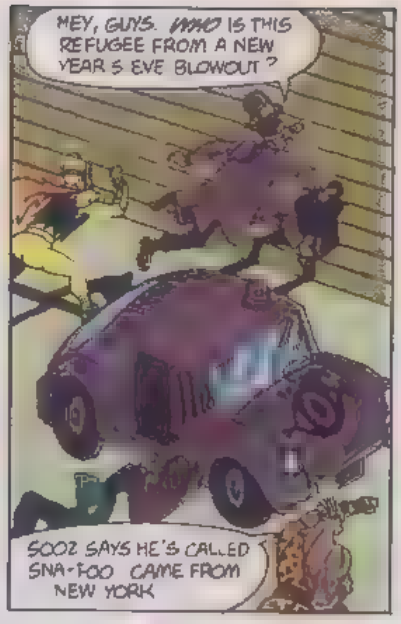
MRS. JACKSON, YOU'RE ASSIGNED TO DESK DUTY TODAY

BONK

OHHHH!

IT'S NOTHING COMPARED TO THE RIOT MRS. JACKSON'S CHILDREN WILL CAUSE HERE IF I ALLOW HER TO LEAVE, MR LEFFERTS!
DWIGHT - YOU CUT THAT OUT
BESIDES, SCOOZ HAS SIGNALED THE OTHERS TO MEET YOU.
IN FACT, MR LONGACRE SHOULD BE THERE BEFORE YOU AND MR. BUTTERFIELD ARRIVE.
PROBABILITY IS 87.% THAT VOICE-OVER AND PRIVATE EYES WILL ALSO ARRIVE THERE AHEAD OF HORSHOT AND MIGHTY MIKE, COORDI NATOR
THANK YOU, SCOOZ
CONFIRMATION THAT STRETCH IS HEADING INTO THE EXCHANGE RIGHT NOW.
WHOA HOLD IT, PEOPLE YOU'RE DOING MORE DAMAGE TRAMPLING ONE ANOTHER THAN ALL THAT NOISE AND LIGHT CAN EVER DO.
YOWWW!
14


HARRY, MAYBE YOU'VE GOT A CAT STUCK IN A TREE SOMEPLACE?
BZZZ
KLANG
THE REST OF THE CREW IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU, THOMAS


HEY, GUYS. WHO IS THIS REFUGEE FROM A NEW YEAR'S EVE BLOWOUT?
SOOZ SAYS HE'S CALLED SNA-FOO CAME FROM NEW YORK

THAT'S SNAFU! LIKE IN "SITUATION NORMAL - ALL FOULED UP"!

LET'S SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT SHUTTING DOWN HIS SYSTEM FULL VISION POWERS ON!

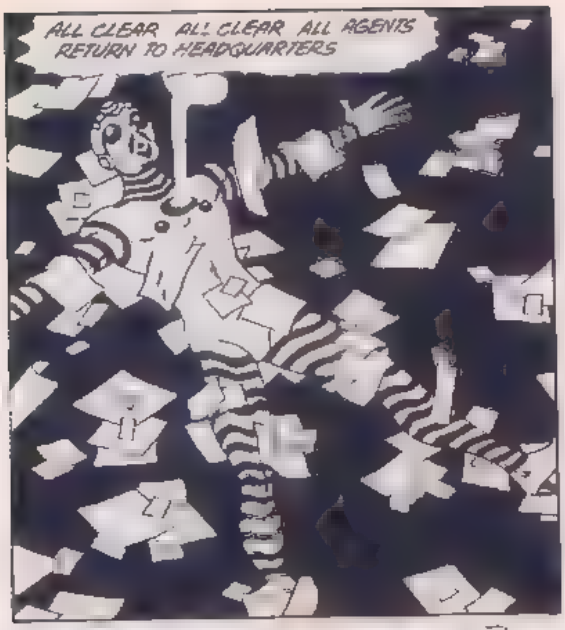
AHHHHH!
BZZZ
WHOOSH

MAKE SURE LES IS OKAY, BILLY THEN BACK AND AND
AND WE'LL BE BACKING UP TOM

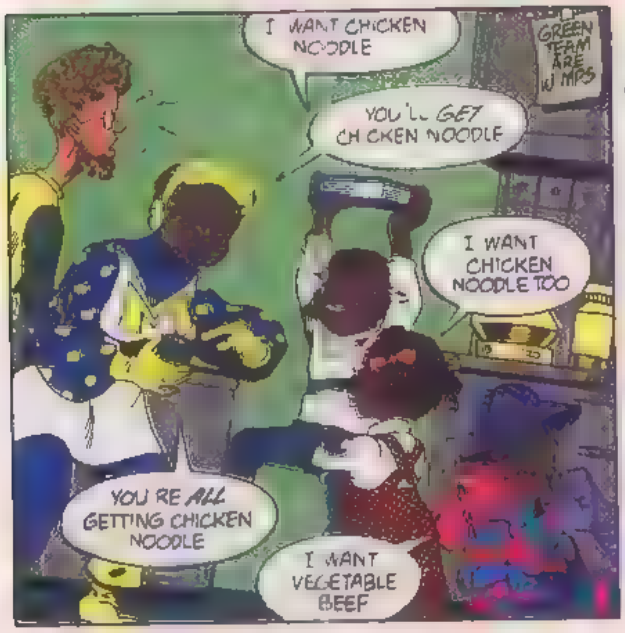
WHO LOOKS TO NEED ALL THE BACKING UP HE CAN GET!

OH, I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE OF THIS NOISE MY BRAIN FEELS LIKE IT'S MELTING.
I'LL GIVE THIS GUY A TASTE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE
BOOM
CHAKKACK
SCUSE ME WHILE I RUN OUT FOR EAR PLUGS!
VREEOO
YOU AND YOUR GIMMICKS GIVE ME SOME OLD-FASHIONED MUSCLE ANY DAY.
HEY, YOU GUYS -- STOP STANDING AROUND AND DO SOMETHINNNNNG!
WE'RE WORKING ON IT, TOM!
YOU GUYS KEEP HIM BUSY. I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
I'LL SEE HOW HE LIKES A FIREWORKS SHOW
JUST DON'T SET THE PLACE ON FIRE!
16

YOU'RE GONNA BE SEEING STARS, SNAFU!
KLANG KLANG
SURPRISE!
YOU'LL GONNA LOVE THIS BROADCAST, PAL!
YAAA
OHHHH



We now return to our regular programming


I WANT CHICKEN NOODLE
GREEN TEAM ARE WIMPS
YOU'LL GET CHICKEN NOODLE
I WANT CHICKEN NOODLE TOO
YOU'RE ALL GETTING CHICKEN NOODLE
I WANT VEGETABLE BEEF

--MELANIE BOULDER THE COUNTRY SINGER
WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?
BELLE HONEY-- WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY LOVER BOY? I SAW HIM ON TV DOWN AT THE STOCK EXCHANGE
BE COOL, MELANIE LES SHOULD BE BACK HERE ANY MINUTE NOW
IN FACT, HERE THEY COME NOW
LESTER, HONEY PIE RE YOU ALL RIGHT?
THIS WAY LES
I'M GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS STUFF.
H S EYEBALLS GOT A BIT FRIED, MEL. HE'LL BE OKAY.
AFTER A REST AND SOME T.L.C. COME ALONG, SUGAR-PLUM. YOU'RE TAKING THE REST OF THE DAY OFF.
YOU HEAR THAT, MR COORDINATOR? LESTER IS OFF DUTY AS OF R.GHT NOW
I HEAR YOU MISS BOULDER LOUD AND CLEAR
RRRi
iiii

GOT ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU, STRETCH.
YEAH, SURE, SOOZ, BUT I NEED SOME TIME TO BUILD UP MY STRENGTH
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, TOM! WE'VE GOT A LITTLE CHILD STUCK DOWN IN A WELL AND THE RESCUE TEAMS CAN'T GET TO HIM
NO REST FOR THE WEARY. HUNH, HARRY I BETTER DO THIS ONE RIGHT AWAY
WHERE'S THAT GLORY-SEEKING DIBNY IN TIMES LIKE THIS?
THE LOCATION IS THE ABANDONED PLAYGROUND BEHIND THE ALBANY AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
WHERE A CROWD OF CONCERNED ONLOOKERS IS MAKING IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT FOR RESCUE WORKERS AND THIS REPORTER AS WELL TO DO OUR RESPECTIVE JOBS
HOLDING AN ANXIOUS IRISH ARE RED AND MARLA MULROONEY, PARENTS OF LITTLE EDWARD, AS HE REMAINS OUT OF RESCUERS REACH IN THE DAMP DARK WELL
OUR HEARTS GO OUT TO THEM IN THEIR HOUR OF DESPAIR AND OUR PRAYERS FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF THEIR LITTLE BOY ARE ON OUR LIPS
20

WE UNDERSTAND THAT A CALL HAS GONE OUT FOR SOME EXTRAORDINARY ASSISTANCE .
LADY, SHUT UP AND GET OUT OF THE WAY
HUNH?!
IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE SOLUTION, YOU'RE PART OF THE PROBLEM... AND YOU, LADY, ARE A BIG PART OF THE PROBLEM!
YIKES
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, YOU ARE SEEING IT JUST AS WE ARE. ONE OF THE FAMOUS STRETCHABLE SUPERHEROES HAS JUST ARRIVED ON THE SCENE.
LINDA, IS THAT PLASTIC MAN OR ELONGATED MAN?
DON T WORRY, KID. YOU'LL BE OUT OF HERE IN A MINUTE
I WANT MY MOMMY
WE'RE NOT EXACTLY SURE WHICH PLIABLE FELLOW THIS IS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, HE'S ALREADY BRINGING LITTLE EDWARD UP SAFELY FROM THE WELL.
HOORAY!
21

OH, EDDIE I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE WOULD HAVE DONE IF YOU HADN'T BEEN RESCUED DOWN THERE
ISN'T IT WONDERFUL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN? WHAT A HEART-WARMING SIGHT
HEY, PAL, I'M GLAD I COULD HELP, BUT IF I WAS IN CHARGE OF SOCIAL SERVICES, I'D INVESTIGATE YOU TWO. WHAT KIND OF NEGLIGENT PARENTS LET THEIR KID PLAY AROUND NEAR AN ABANDONED WELL TO BEGIN WITH?
AND YOU VULTURES -- YOU SNOOP IN WAITING FOR SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN HYPE ALL DAY FOR YOUR EVENING NEWS, YOU GUYS MAKE ME SICK!
AS FOR THE REST OF YOU OUT THERE, NEXT TIME THERE'S A PROBLEM, DON'T CALL THE TV STATIONS, CALL NERD HOTLINE!
AND ON THAT NOTE, HARRY -- I'M TAKING THE REST OF THE DAY OFF!
THAT'S ANOTHER ONE DOWN THINK ANYBODY'S GONNA FINISH THE DAY?
ANHH :GAKK:
ANDY? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
:HSSS: :CHAKKK:
HE'S LOST HIS VOICE
IT WAS ONLY A RHETORICAL QUESTION.
22

Epilogue one...
WELL, TERRY, I THOUGHT FOR A WHILE YOU'D BE SEEING SOME ACTION TODAY, WHAT WITH EVERYBODY GETTING HURT AND ALL.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T SEE WHAT USE I'D BE, BELLE.
COME ON, TERRY. SOMEBODY WHO CAN SHOOT LIGHTNING OUT OF HIS EYES WOULD HELP IN ANY NUMBER OF SITUATIONS.
SHOOT LIGHTNING... FROM MY EYES? I'M AFRAID YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA, BELLE.
I WAS HIRED TO HELP PROCESS THE PHONE MESSAGES. I'M A SPEED READER.
;Sigh;
I'M VERY PROUD OF THE WAY YOU KIDS BEHAVED TODAY.
MOM, DWIGHT TRIED TO GET ALL THE WATER OUT OF THE WATER COOLER.
DID NOT, TATTLETALE.
DID TOO!
YEAH, BABE-- I'M GONNA BE LATE. I GOTTA MEET SOMEBODY BEFORE I COME HOME.
NO, IT AIN'T A SAVE... IT'S A ME! IT'S SOMETHING WITH THE JOB.
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
KLUNK
23

Epilogue Two...
I'M HERE, YOU WIMP. WHERE YA HIDIN'?
C'MON, I AIN'T GOT ALL NIGHT. SHOW YOURSELF.
WOOOSH!!
COWARD! I SHOULDA EXPECTED THIS.
GO AHEAD-- RUN!
IT AIN'T OVER, PAL. I KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE!
HERO HOTLINE, GOOD EVENING... A MURDER, SIR? HAVE YOU NOTIFIED THE POLICE?
the preceding was brought to you by...
BOB ROZAKIS · STEPHEN DE STEFANO
WRITER · CO-CREATORS · ARTIST
KURT SCHAFFENBERGER · INKER
JOHN COSTANZA · LETTERER
BOB RO · COLORIST
BRIAN AUGUSTYN · EDITOR
END

HERO HOTLINE

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN President and Publisher
DICK GIORDANO V.P.–Executive Editor
BRIAN AUGUSTYN Editor
RICHARD BRUNING Art Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM Mgr.–Editorial Admin.
PAT BASTIENNE Mgr.–Editorial Coordinator
BOB ROZAKIS Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ Executive V.P.
JOE ORLANDO V.P.–Creative Director
BRUCE BRISTOW V.P.–Sales & Marketing
MATT RAGONE Circulation Director
PAT CALDON Controller

You may have seen this Publishorial when it ran in some DC titles a couple of months ago. What it doesn't mention is that HERO HOTLINE is one of the books being colored on the computer, uniting two of Bob Rozakis's pet projects in one place...

It's been sitting behind a closed door in production, the inner sanctum of high tech, where luminous colors on a screen light up the darkened room. It comes with its own tools and its own language: colorrun, runbrush, colormix, radiate, mixbrush, smear, stretch. You may have heard about it—our own computer on which we can color comic books and directly generate the color separations.

Color separations? More Martian? Perhaps you know that all basic printing is made up of four colors—yellow, blue, and red, which together mix to make most of the colors in the rainbow, and black for the black line and type. Separations are just that—they're pieces of film that separate a color into its component parts. Two kinds of separations are commonly used: flat separation, where the film is hand-cut for each gradation of color, and process separation, where the colors are separated photographically.

In our flat separations we are very limited in the range of tints we can use. The complexity of the film-cutting permits us only four percentages of color: 25%, 50%, 70%, and 100%. To add another percentage we'd have to cut another piece of film. When you mix together all the combinations of red, yellow, and blue available in the four percentages flat separations allow us, you get a total of 124 colors.

Enter the computer. The computer generates film for separations without regard to tint gradation. All percentages are possible, from 0 to 100%. What does this mean? A palette of something like 6.2 million colors!

Bob Rozakis, our head of production, has been the champion of the new computer. Bob remembers: "As long as five years ago I had seen the basics of things like the paint brush program, being able to draw on the screen, to color on the screen. A friend of mine is an engineer for a company that builds water tanks and they used a paint box system as part of computerizing their business. I had seen that and thought there is an application here somewhere for comic books.

"At that point he was doing the diagram on the screen. He didn't have a system for scanning in art. Over time, though, new features were developed. He would call me up and say 'you've gotta come over and see this new program we've got.'"

Bob had a vision, if unformed, early on, but it was not long before computer companies also saw an application and came knocking on Bob's door. "About four years ago," says Bob, "the first computer companies came to see me. Eventually, about every four months someone would show up on my doorstep, but they had nothing concrete to offer.

"In addition," Bob continues, "most of the computer companies had the same scenario. If you can get your artists to close up the black lines you can use this. The trouble was, if there was a break in a black line, color would leak through the opening and down most of the page."

Bob, of course, understood our business far better than any computer company. He knew that it was contrary both to artistic freedom and aesthetic expression for artists to have to close up lines. Bob did what any person in his position would do. He told the computer companies to come back when they had a solution.

The breakthrough, interestingly, came from as far away as Ireland. "Basically," says Bob, "Grafascan, a company based in Dublin, was one of those companies I told to come back with a solution. They went home, spent about two years working on it, and came up with a system that worked. They also had an advantage over other companies. Most were computer companies trying to sell me a computer system to do color separations. Grafascan had been in the color separation business for twenty-five years and they decided to go into computer separations."

Right now we have the Grafascan system on trial for six months. So far, BEST OF BRAVE AND BOLD #6, DRAGONLANCE #4 and #5, and DOOM PATROL #19 have been colored on the computer. What's different about them? "The first thing to notice," Bob elucidates, "is a wider variety of color. Then look for color gradations like the sun setting over the mountain in BRAVE AND BOLD."

We're using the Grafascan system right now exclusively on our offset books. The effects are much more noticeable on our offset books than on our regular newsprint letterpress books because we use a much finer screen, and, of course, because the paper is better.

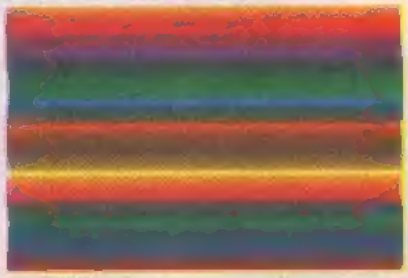
"We *could* use it on letterpress," Bob admits, "but we'd lose the special effects. It would be comparable to designing a brand-new outfit, then wearing it under a raincoat."

We have only begun to exploit the strengths of the computer, but it has a great deal of exciting potential. "It eliminates the probability of errors in terms of having the wrong color," Bob explains. "In addition, they've added a variety of tools into the machine so that we can get airbrush effects, color gradations, a repeating design function, and a pattern generator . . ." to name a few.

At this point, we don't have anyone trained sufficiently who could do a Prestige Format book, but Bob assures me that it's only a matter of time before we can see the full range of effects of which the computer is capable. "The tools are all in the machine," says Bob. "It's only limited by the imagination of the colorist."

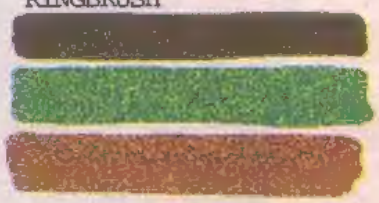
—Jenette

Here are some sample effects the computer system can do...

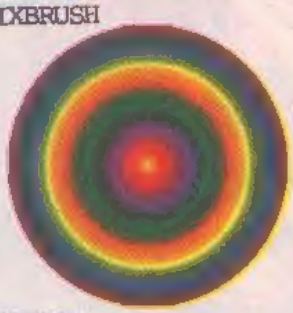


GRAD

RINGBRUSH



MIXBRUSH



RADGRAD

RUNBRUSH

"Readers may not have even noticed the greater variety of colors we used in HH #'s 1 and 2. Things like Hotshot's airbrushed cape are a simple task for the computer, though they would be far more difficult using traditional methods."

"Stephen came in before he started drawing HH #3 and we discussed some of the special effects we could use for Snafu's powers. We were reviving an old villain who was perfect to show off the fancy things the computer could do."

"Coloring the first issue on the computer was exciting—like I had a new set of crayons. Now I color photocopies of the pages and mark them up. Danny [Vozzo, DC's resident computer technician/colorist] translates that into the computer. After he did the characters and backgrounds of the Snafu sequence, I came in and played with the special tools in the system to create the Snafu effects."